

Development of empirically driven checklists for learners' interactional competence

Fumiyo Nakatsuhara, Lyn May, Daniel Lam & Evelina Galaczi

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Acknowledgement

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RESEARCH BACKGROUND

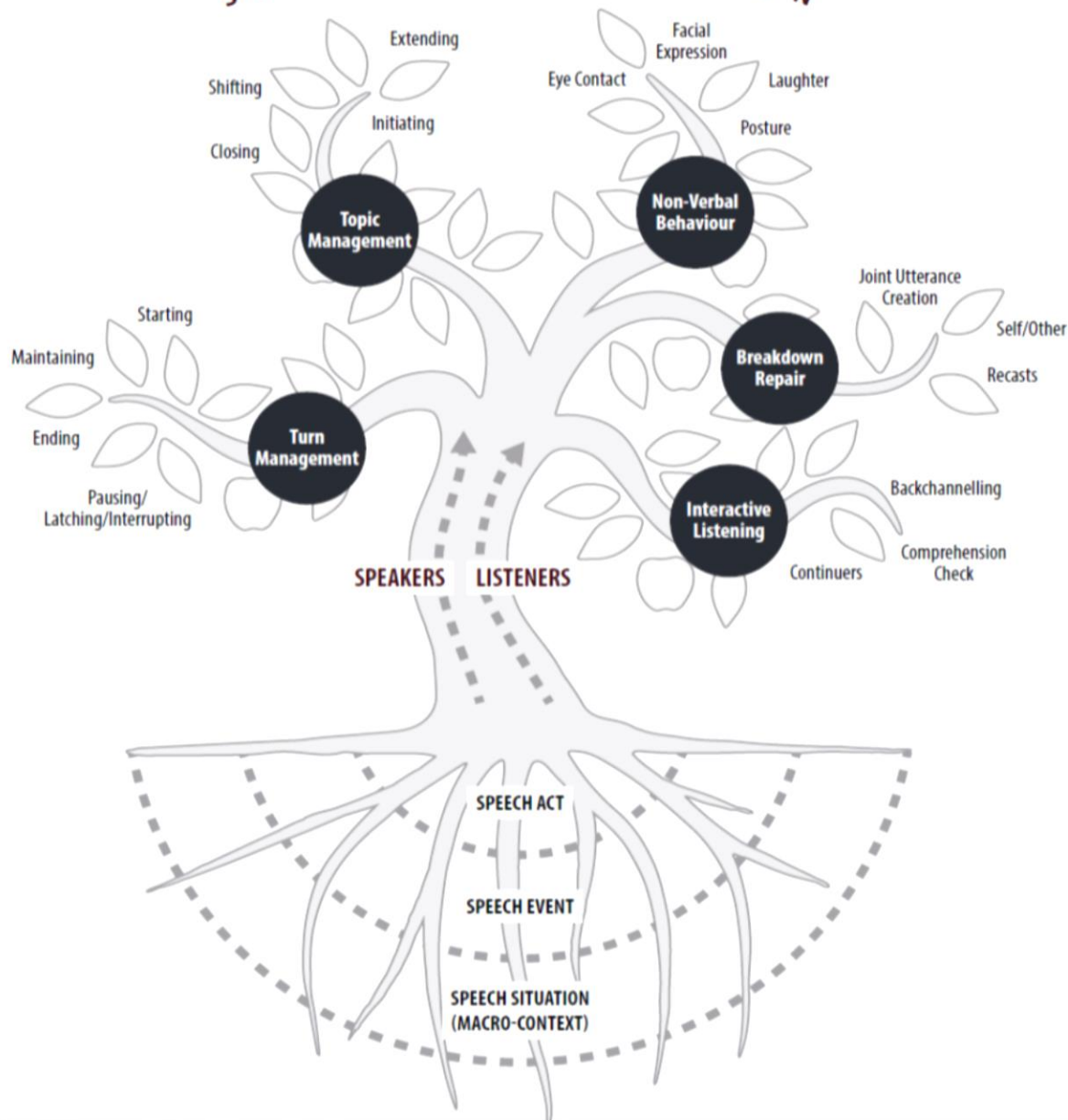


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Cambridge Assessment
English

SPOKEN INTERACTION



- Common communication assignment (McNamara)

The ability to understand meaning in different dimensions

This ability is essential for speakers and listeners to communicate effectively

to achieve their communicative purposes

c)

ts in be

1;

d pragmatic

speakers
ects of:

behaviours.

(Taylor, 2018)

Cambridge English
Speaking rating scale



Grammar

Communicative skills/strategies

...cy, uses high level discourse structures with near native-like accuracy

... wide range of vocabulary with near native-like use, vocabulary is clearly appropriate to express opinion

... confident and natural, asks others to expand on views, shows ability to negotiate meaning, shows how own and others' ideas are related

...ndence, shows ability to use full range of grammatical structures but makes some errors, errors do not impede the meaning of the utterances

... lexis sufficient for task although not always precisely used

... generally confident, responds appropriately to others' opinions, shows ability to negotiate meaning

...sitant, ...al ...nd groping

... relies mostly on simple (but generally accurate) sentences, has enough grammar to express meaning, complex sentences are used but often inaccurately

... lexis generally adequate for expressing opinion but often used inaccurately

... responds to others, shows agreement or disagreement to others' opinions

...ned speech, ...groping for ...d long

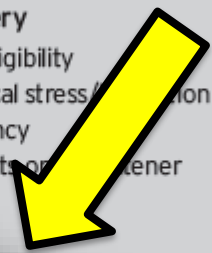
... uses simple inaccurate sentences and fragmented phrases, doesn't have enough to express

... lexis not adequate for task, cannot express opinion

... does not initiate interaction, produces monologue only, shows some turn taking, may say, 'I agree with you,' but does not relate ideas in explanation

Delivery

- Intelligibility
- Lexical stress
- Fluency
- Effects on listener



Interactive Communication

Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers.

...ntains and develops the ...tion and negotiates an outcome.

...ble despite ...on-standard

... stress and ... appropriately ... speaks promptly ... ntly - occasionally ... d by some hesitancy ... res almost no careful ... ing

...telligible despite some ...se of non-standard phonemes

Challenges in assessing IC

Interactive Communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers.• Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiates and responds appropriately.• Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome with very little support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiates and responds appropriately.• Keeps the interaction going with very little prompting and support.

Rating scales are mainly used for rating...

- **Limited diagnostic information or feedback for learners**

Learning-Oriented Assessment (LOA)

- **‘Test takers are also learners’:** the potential for standardised tests to provide not only a summative judgement of performance, but also feedback to learners (e.g. Galaczi 2014; Jones & Saville 2016)
- **Appropriate and timely feedback:** for learners to ‘feedforward’ (Carless 2007), supporting both current and future student learning (Hattie & Timperly 2007)
- **Learner engagement:** Raise learners’ awareness of success criteria, opportunities for self- and peer-assessment (Hamp-Lyons & Green, 2015; Turner & Purpura, 2016)
- **Interactional competence often neglected in the endeavor to provide LOA for L2 speaking:** Interactive skills receive relatively little coverage in comparison to other speaking sub-skills in test preparation textbooks.

Bridging theory and practice: Interactional Competence

- **Considerable research attention** to IC in the field of speaking assessment (e.g. Brown & Ducasse 2009; Galaczi 2014; Lam 2018; Leaper 2014; May 2011; Nakatsuhara 2013)
- Research findings **NOT fully realised** in terms of informing the teaching and learning of interactional skills in a **comprehensive and user-friendly way**.
- Not always easy to rate **co-constructed performance** in pairs, but raters/teachers can accurately **describe interactional features** observed in pairs (May 2011)

What about developing a **practical tool** with which teachers can give meaningful feedback on learners' interactive skills?



Aim of the Project

- To develop a LOA tool for interactional competence, i.e. **a practical checklist and accompanying descriptions and recommendations** that teachers can use to provide feedback on learners' interactional skills.

RESEARCH DESIGN



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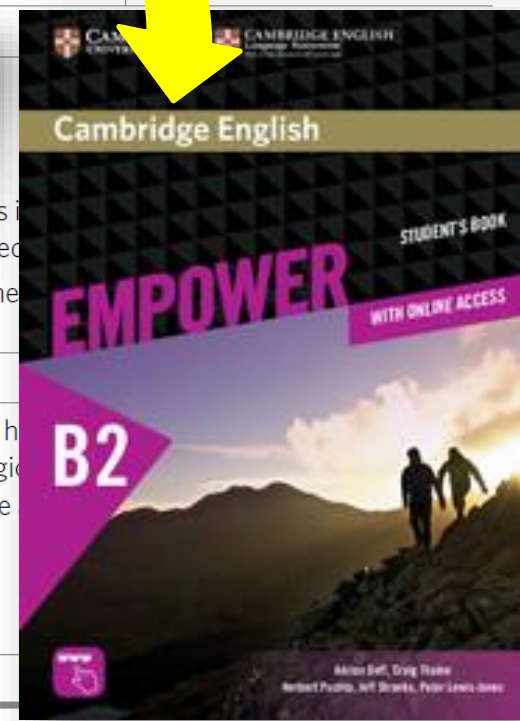
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This project focussed on...

	Grammar and Vocabulary	Discourse Management	Pronunciation	Interactive Communication
B2				
5	Shows a good degree of control of a range of grammatical forms and vocabulary. Uses a wide range of vocabulary to view topics.	Produces extended stretches of language with very little hesitation. Contributions are relevant and there is a clear organisation of ideas.	Is intelligible. Intonation is appropriate. Sentence and word stress is accurately placed. Individual sounds are articulated clearly.	Initiates and responds appropriately, linking contributions to those of other speakers. Maintains and develops the interaction and negotiates towards an outcome.
4				
3	Shows a good degree of control of simple and at grammatical forms. Uses a range of vocabulary to view topics.			
2				
1	Shows a good degree of control of simple vocabulary which is used in everyday situations.			
0				

Cambridge English

Here are some of the things in life which can affect our happiness.
 1. Talk to each other about how important these things are for a happy life.
 2. Decide which two are the most important.



Three Phases of the Project

Phase 1: Six experienced *B2 First* examiners viewed 12 videos of the *B2 First* collaborative task performance, recorded verbal comments on **the IC aspects that influenced their evaluation** and provided **recommendations for improving IC performance.**

- **Step 1:** View the performance once without stopping, give IC scores and provide a brief summary statement
- **Step 2:** View the same performance again, while pausing the video clip at any point as they wish and commenting on anything that they felt was important to their impression of each candidate's IC
- **Step 3:** Provide recommendations for each candidate to enhance his/her IC performance

- **Phase 2:** 72 sets of examiner comments as well as 12 paired test performances were transcribed. Examiner comments were then **thematically analysed with NVivo**. 25% of the data were co-coded.

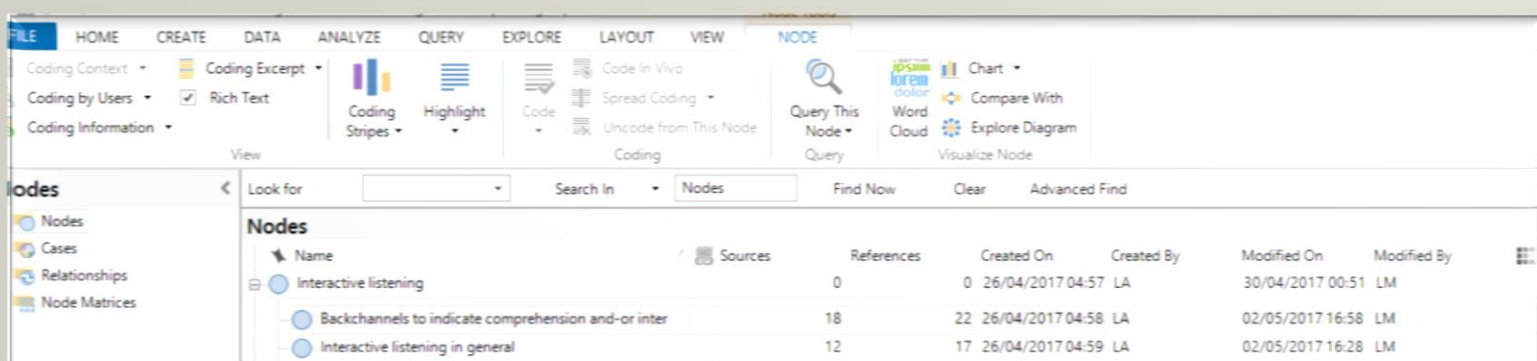
F: Well I think all ideas on the uh on the booklet are quite good actually. I think holiday flats will attract more tourists because there're- it's just more space?

Ok, so they don't start by deciding who is going to begin. Florine just

st
bi
co
to
th

Uh for t
th

M: Mr
be



Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
Interactive listening		0	26/04/2017 04:57	LA	30/04/2017 00:51	LM
Backchannels to indicate comprehension and-or inter		18	22 26/04/2017 04:58	LA	02/05/2017 16:58	LM
Interactive listening in general		12	17 26/04/2017 04:59	LA	02/05/2017 16:28	LM

F: The themes and sub-themes emerged from the analysis were
Ok interpreted in light of the *B2 First* IC scale and relevant literature (e.g. Galaczi, 2014)

→ **A draft checklist and accompanying descriptions and recommendations for learners**

M:

F: Mm. Yeah I think you have- can have a lot of fun in parks though.
() very nice picnics with- picnic with your friends or

- **Phase 3:** The draft checklist and accompanying materials were **piloted with four language teachers/examiners** who had taught *B2 First* preparation classes and/or any other interactional speaking skills. → **Revise and refine the checklist and accompanying materials**



RESULTS & MATERIALS DEVELOPED



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Macro themes for salient IC features

Criterion aspects		No of coded comments
Theme 1	Initiate discussions, introduce new ideas	204
Theme 2	Respond to partner	236
Theme 3	Maintain and develop the interaction	382
Theme 4	Negotiate towards a common decision	61
Theme 5	Need or provide support	42
Non-criterion aspects		
Theme 6	Interactive listening	40
Theme 7	Body language	78
Theme 8	Manner of interaction and how 'natural' the interaction is	94

Theme 3: Maintain and develop the interaction

Actively invite partner in by asking questions

'Do you think it's useful or not?'

'Which one do you think is more important, X or Y?'

Take turns to ask questions

'What did you mean by...?'

Share ideas with partner

Dominate the interaction or often

monologues, not sharing the floor

Develop ideas by **explaining, elaborating, justifying and/or providing examples**

Provide only **minimal** or **brief responses** that do not develop an idea/topic further

Carefully consider the points under discussion and contribute responses **relevant** to the topic/task

Move on to a next idea **before the current idea has been adequately discussed**

Respond in ways that are **not relevant** to partner's point and/or task

Use a range of **functional language appropriate** to interaction

Overuse formulaic expressions



Theme 6: Interactive listening

Show **listener support** and display **interest** in partner's talk (e.g. through back-channelling, nodding, smiling, or eye contact)

Demonstrate they **have been listening** carefully/attentively through extending or developing partner's idea in their next turn

Give partner time to express and formulate their ideas

Show **little or no interest** in partner's talk and give **little or no listener support**

Seem **more focussed on what they want to contribute** rather than listening to their partner's ideas or views

Give partner little or no opportunity to talk



IC checklist + Description + Feedback

Does the learner.....? (Please tick (✓) as appropriate. You do not need to tick all boxes if it is difficult to make binary judgments based on observed performances. L indicates a learner on the left and R indicates a learner on the right.)

1.1 Start the discussion?

Positive		Negative		Description	Feedback
1.1a) Negotiate who/how to start in a collaborative manner, involving the partner	L	1.1d) Start the discussion with a monologue without involving the partner; or in a way difficult for the partner to contribute	L	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good way for the student to begin the discussion is to involve the partner in deciding who or how to start (e.g. by saying 'Shall I start?' or 'Where should we start?'). It is less desirable to start by delivering a long speech, assigning who to start without negotiation, or starting in a way that makes it difficult for the partner to respond or contribute (e.g. asking a generic question 'what do you think?' or a question that simply repeats the task instructions). It is also good if the student takes the initiative or shows the willingness to start, rather than be hesitant or wait passively for the partner to start speaking. Moreover, it is important to show a clear understanding of what the task is about (e.g. 'So, we need to decide which activities would make life in a city more enjoyable.') and where the discussion is going. It is less desirable for the student to start by simply describing a picture. 	<p>Well done! → Great to show that you are ready to start the discussion! Well done also on deciding together with your partner who to start or how to start the discussion. You have also shown that you understand what the task is about and where the discussion should be going.</p> <p>Needs more work → Showing that you are ready to start and also happy to work with your partner are both important. Next time, you may want to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decide together with your partner who to start (e.g. 'Shall I start?'/ 'Would you like to start?') and how to start the discussion (e.g. 'Where should we start?') Avoid either being too hesitant to start, or starting the conversation on your own delivering a long speech, as your partner may find it difficult to respond to it. Show that you understand what the task is about (e.g. 'So, we need to talk about/decide...'). Try not to start simply by describing a picture.
	R		R		
1.1b) Take the initiative or show willingness to start	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.1e) Wait passively for the partner to start	<input type="checkbox"/>		
1.1c) Start in a way that is clearly relevant to the task	<input type="checkbox"/>	1.1f) Start in a way that seems to ignore the task instructions	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Available at:

Research Notes, 70

IC checklist (Concise version)

The student can...	Interaction strategies	Learner 1			Learner 2		
		<i>Well done!</i>	<i>Needs more work</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Well done!</i>	<i>Needs more work</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Initiate new ideas	a) New ideas : Take initiative to contribute relevant new ideas						
	b) Right time for new ideas : Contribute new ideas after the current idea has been adequately discussed						
	c) Language : Use a range of appropriate language to initiate new ideas and/or shift from one idea to another						
2. Keep the discussion going over several turns	d) Develop (own idea) : Extend your own ideas sufficiently						
	e) Develop (partner's idea) : Extend the partner's ideas by linking their own contribution to the partner's and giving more than just a token response						
	f) Invite : Actively invite your partner if needed (e.g. asking questions, helping complete a sentence where necessary, prompting partner to say more)						
	g) Listen : Show listener engagement through back-channelling and short responses (e.g. 'exactly', 'right', 'OK')						
	h) Be collaborative : Keep a natural and collaborative flow to the interaction (e.g. no long pauses within/ between turns, no dominating interruptions)						
	i) Language : Use a range of appropriate language						

Feedback (Concise version)

Feedback for Learners

1. Initiate new ideas

Well done! It is great that you bring new ideas into the discussion. To do this even better, make sure you think about 1) *when* to bring in a new idea (has the last one been fully discussed?), 2) *how* to introduce it, and 3) *how relevant* it is to the task.

Needs more work Try to offer new ideas as well as respond to your partner's ideas. Make sure you also think about 1) whether the new idea is relevant to the task, 2) when to introduce it (has the last one been fully discussed?), and 3) how to introduce it.

Useful Phrases

To introduce a new idea, you can say:

- 'Well, how about ____?'
- 'What do you think about ____?'
- 'I also think that ____ is good'

2. Keep the discussion going

Well done!


Develop (own and partner's idea): Great job in responding to and developing each other's ideas. Well done for doing it over several turns by giving reasons for your choice, explaining why you agree/disagree with your partner, giving examples, or providing more details.

Needs more work


Develop (own idea): It is important not to state your choice (e.g. 'I think a café is good.') or simply describe an idea or picture and stop there. Next time, try to extend your ideas by giving reasons for your choice, giving examples, or providing more details.

Learning-oriented assessment feedback

Well done!

- 
- Gives credit for the positive features
 - Encourages learners to keep those features
 - Outlines ways to further enhance performance

Needs more work

- 
- Helps learners identify problematic aspects
 - Outlines ways to improve
 - Provides useful phrases they could use

IMPLICATIONS

LOA potential of developed materials

- Offer **feedback on IC skills, raise learners' awareness of success criteria** (Turner & Purpura, 2016)
 - Specific areas of IC
 - Ways to improve
- Give teachers diagnostic information → **modify learning objectives** (Jones & Saville, 2016)
- A tool for **self or peer assessment** (Carless, 2007)
- Provide a **rich description of IC** (in discussion tasks)
 - teachers
 - content writers

THANK YOU!

Fumiyo Nakatsuhara, Lyn May, Daniel Lam & Evelina Galaczi



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- Supplementary slides to use if relevant to questions from the audience

Theme 1: Initiates discussions & introduces new ideas

Negotiate who/how to start in a **collaborative** manner

Start the discussion with a monologue without involving the partner

Take the initiative
show willingness

'Shall I start or would you like to start?'

'Where shall we start?'

'So, we need to decide which activities would make life in a city more enjoyable.'

ask partner to

Start in a way that is clearly **relevant** to the **task**

Start in a way that seems to **ignore** the task **instructions**

Take initiative to contribute new ideas

Not take initiative to contribute new ideas

Contribute new ideas after the current idea is **adequate**

'Well, how about _____?'

'What do you think about _____?'

'I also think that _____ is good'

(pointing to a picture) 'I also like _____'

Initiate a new idea before the current one has been discussed


Contribute **ideas relevant** to the task

Initiate a new idea which do not seem relevant to the task

Use **appropriate language** to shift from one idea to another

Initiate a new idea **abruptly**

Theme 2: Responds to partner




Agree by giving more than a token response, **extending** where appropriate

Disagree with or challenge the partner **politely** and provide **justification**

Link their own **contribution** to the **partner's** (developing an idea across turns)

Give only **minimal** or **token responses** to what the partner has said



Only give their **own ideas** and opinions rather than link to what the partner has said (and develop that idea further)

'Perhaps you're right, but...'

'Yes, that's a good idea, but...'

'Like what you said, ...'

'As you mentioned, ...'

'I agree with your idea that ..., because....'

Theme 4: Negotiates towards a common decision

Proactively work towards making a joint decision using appropriate language

Take a **passive** role and make little attempt to negotiate towards an outcome

Work towards a decision by **summarising**, **evaluating** and **comparing** points raised in the discussion

Discuss individual ideas/items but make little attempt to summarise, evaluate, compare or prioritise them

Begin to negotiate towards an outcome at an **appropriate time**

Begin to negotiate towards an outcome before items have been adequately discussed

Acknowledge partner's views and show willingness to **compromise**

Show limited willingness to compromise or consider partner's views

'Which one should we go for?'

'Which one do you think is the best / the most important?'

1. Summarise the points discussed so far
2. Evaluate or compare the pros and cons of different ideas
3. Narrow down the options available



Theme 5: Extent to which support is needed

Require little or no support to engage in the interaction or complete the task

Require support from partner or examiner to engage in the interaction or complete the task

Provide support to partner (e.g. encourage, ask questions, provide a word or help complete a sentence where necessary, prompt partner to say more)



1. Help your partner express himself/herself, by providing a word that s/he is looking for, or helping him/her finish a sentence if s/he is struggling to do so
2. Point to a picture and invite your partner to make comments
3. Help your partner say more about an idea by asking him/her to give reasons
4. Clarify what the task requires by repeating the task question or putting it in your own words

Theme 7: Body language

Use **appropriate body language** (e.g. nodding, smiling) to **display interest** in partner's contributions, or to signal turn-taking



Maintain appropriate **eye contact** with partner

Show boredom or disinterest in partner's contributions and/or the task through negative body language, including facial expression

Look at the examiner, prompts or pictures rather than making eye contact with partner



Theme 8: Manner of interaction & how natural the interaction is

Interact with **ease** and **confidence**, able to take the lead where necessary, polite and not domineering

Co-construct the interaction in a manner which looks/sounds **natural**



Dominate the discussion, show little sensitivity to partner and willingness to cooperate; or is too **passive** and **hesitant**

Interact in a way that seems **artificial** or unnatural



Rater recommendations

#	Focus of recommendation
21	Approaching the task
23	Introducing new topics
30	Asking your partner questions
38	Responding to your partner's ideas
16	Developing your partner's ideas
17	Keeping the interaction going
19	Developing your own ideas, justifying, explaining, elaborating
15	Quality of your contributions
14	Amount that you contribute to the interaction
33	The manner in which you contribute: ease, confidence, assertiveness etc.
29	Interactive listening, active, supportive, giving partner time to contribute
4	Maintaining your turn
21	Using functional language, including linking words
3	Using conversational strategies
21	Negotiating toward an outcome
22	Body Language
17	Creating a natural, genuine, authentic interaction